

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 AID-05 TRSE-00
OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01
ICA-11 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SS-15 /098 W
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R 140800Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3479
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
CINCPAC HONOLULU
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 1088

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SREF, ID, PP
SUBJECT: VISIT OF UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE

REF: PORT MORESBY 1082

1. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES, ROBERT SAMPATKUMAR, RESIDENT IN KUALA LUMPUR, CALLED ON ME TODAY (JULY 14) TO DISCUSS HIS RECENT VISIT TO IRIANESE REFUGEES IN WEST SEPIK PROVINCE OF PNG. HE TALKED TO LEADERS OF THE MORE THAN 300 REFUGEES WHO FLED FROM THE VILLAGES BOMBED BY THE INDONESIAN MILITARY EARLY THIS MONTH AND ALSO TO REFUGEES IN THE WEWAK JAIL WHO CAME OVER EARLIER THIS YEAR.

2. SAMPATKUMAR VERY STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT THE REFUGEES
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SHOULD NOT BE REQUIRED TO RETURN TO IRIAN JAYA AGAINST THEIR WILL. IF THEY WANT TO GO BACK, HE SEES THIS AS THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, BUT IF THEY ARE AFRAID TO GO BACK HE BELIEVES THEY SHOULD REMAIN IN PNG UNTIL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEM TO GO ELSEWHERE CAN BE WORKED OUT. HE BELIEVES THAT A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNHCR SHOULD INTERVIEW ANY REFUGEE ALLEGEDLY WANTING TO RETURN TO IRIAN JAYA BEFORE

THAT PERSON GOES BACK.

3. SAMPATKUMAR SAID THAT UNHCR CAN PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE GPNG FOR THE FEEDING AND HOUSING OF REFUGEES. HE HAS LOCATED A PLACE IN THE TELEFOMIN AREA WHICH WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR A REFUGEE CAMP. HE DOES NOT EXPECT THE UNHCR TO ESTABLISH AN OFFICE HERE, BUT RATHER WILL WORK THROUGH THE UNDP RES REP, WITH FREQUENT VISITS FROM K.L. HE SAID HE WOULD RETURN WITHIN THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS AND MIGHT WANT TO RAISE THE QUESTION OF US FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AT THAT TIME. I TOLD HIM ANY DECISION ON FINANCES WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM WASHINGTON.

4. HE WAS SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY THE ATTITUDE OF THE GPNG. I TOLD HIM I THOUGHT THAT WHEN HE CALLED AT DFAT LATER TODAY HE WOULD FIND A CHANGING ATTITUDE. I SAID MY RECENT CONVERSATION WITH DFAT (REFTEL) LED ME TO BELIEVE THAT A CONSIDERABLE HARDENING AGAINST INDONESIA WAS TAKING PLACE, AND I BELIEVE DFAT WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE UNHCR PLAY A ROLE IN COPING WITH WHAT THEY SAW AS A STEADILY GROWING PROBLEM.

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Message Attributes

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